



INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF
CHILD
SERVICES

Recognizing & Reporting Child Abuse & Neglect

Presentation to Henry County

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Our Mission

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) protects children from abuse and neglect, and works to ensure their financial support.



Child Welfare

Core Functions:

- Protect & keep children safe from abuse & neglect.
- Receive reports of abuse & neglect.
- Complete assessments on reports.
- Ongoing case management to guide a family through services, placement, permanency & case closure.



Child Support Bureau

Core Functions:

- Administer the child support program.
- Federally required, state administered, county operated.
- Child support functions:
 - Locate
 - Paternity establishment
 - Support order establishment
 - Enforcement
 - Payment processing
 - Disbursement
 - ISETS / INvest
 - Medical Support



What Is Physical Abuse?

Any non-accidental physical injury to a child caused by a parent or caregiver that results in or threatens serious injury.



What is Neglect?

Parent, guardian or custodian does not supply child with:

Food	Clothing
Shelter	Medical Care
Education	Supervision



How Do You Report Child Abuse?

Call the Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline

1-800-800-5556



Who Should Report?

- Indiana is a mandatory reporting state. Any person who has reason to believe a child is being abused or neglected shall make a report.
- Medical professionals, teachers & law enforcement officials have a higher duty to report abuse or neglect.



Reporting

Call 1-800-800-5556

An intake specialist:

- Directs caller immediately to 911 or law enforcement if child is in imminent danger.
- Listens and asks questions using intake guidance tool.
- Captures report information.
- Sends report to local county office to determine next steps.



Reporting

Intake specialist will ask questions about:

Child's current safety, circumstances & identifying information.

Names of Children Involved	Ages of Children
Parent/Guardian/Custodian's Name	Addresses and Phone Numbers
Substance Abuse Issues	Domestic Violence
Mental Health Concerns	Weapons in the Home

Always report suspected abuse even if you don't know answers to all the questions.



Reporting

After the call:

- A thorough review of any known previous child protective services history with the family is completed.
- The intake specialist will complete an official intake report.
- Report provided to local county office to determine next steps.

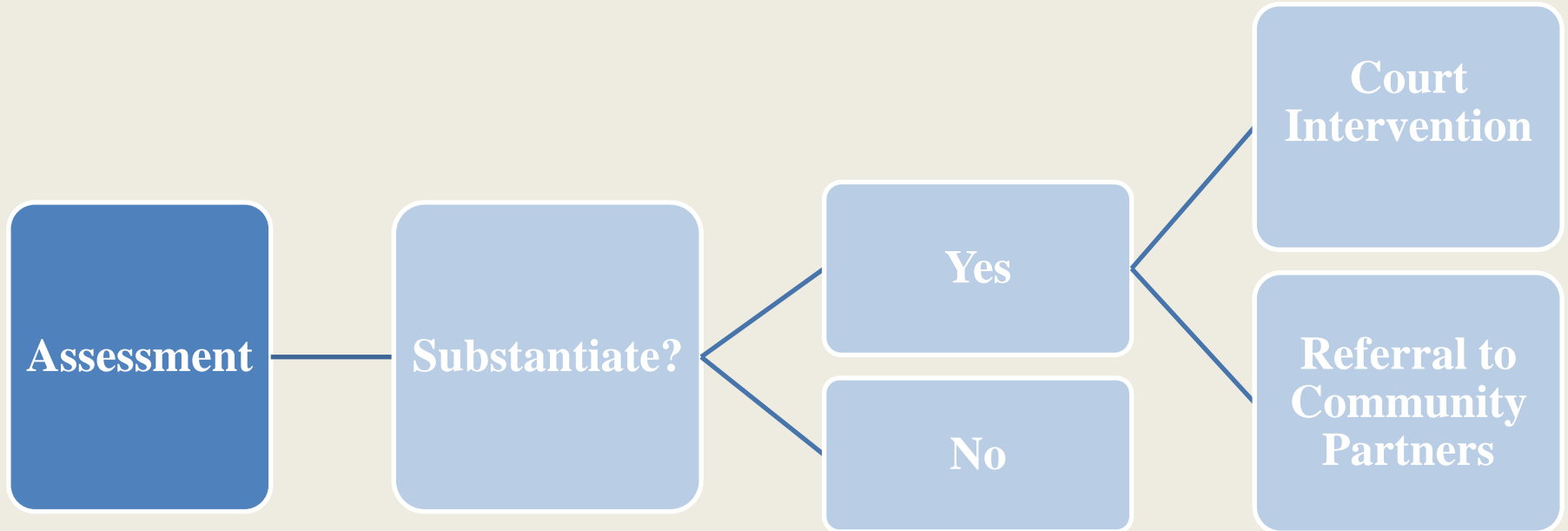


Action

Per Indiana law, certain criteria must be met before a family case manager can be dispatched to a home:

- If the allegations meet any or all criteria, a family case manager will be assigned to complete a thorough assessment. Response times vary:
 - IMMEDIATELY/1 hour (imminent danger)
 - 24 hours
 - Up to 5 days
- Any calls with similar allegations to a current assessment/open case with a family are referred to the family case manager or supervisor for follow-up.

Intervention Process





Assessment

A family case manager will:

- Talk with the report source, parents, extended families, child, siblings, witnesses.
- Visit home or place where alleged abuse/neglect occurred.
- Determine if environment is safe for the child.
- Request medical/mental health evaluations, substance abuse screens.



Outcomes of Assessment

Substantiate

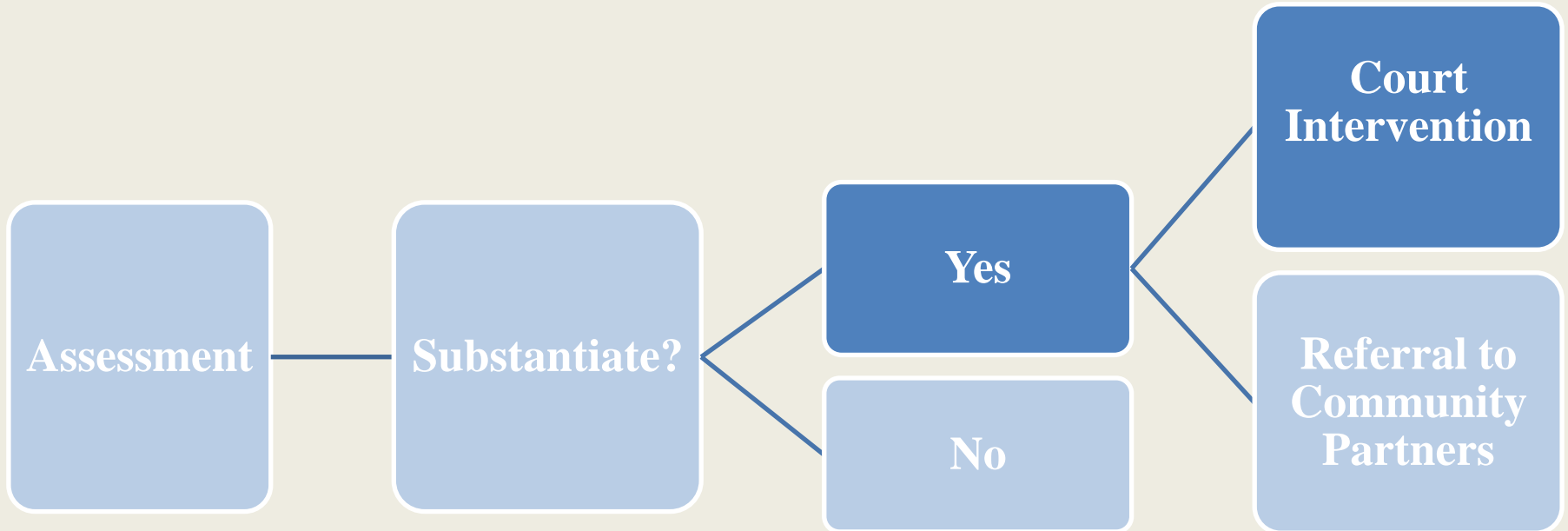
DCS finds enough facts to prove that child abuse or neglect has occurred.

Unsubstantiate

DCS finds no credible evidence that child abuse or neglect has occurred.



Intervention Process





Level of Intervention

Level of intervention with substantiation:

- Informal adjustment
- Child in need of services (CHINS)
- No formal involvement needed

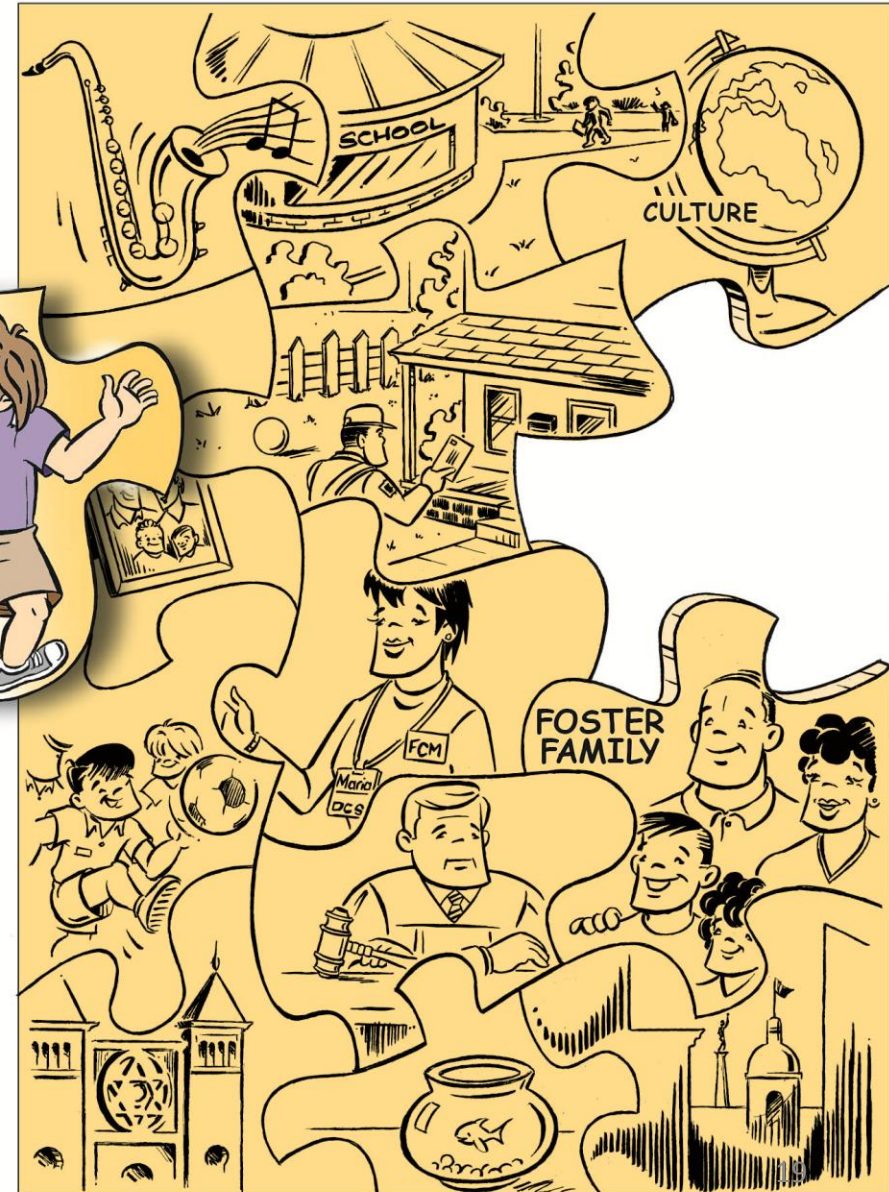
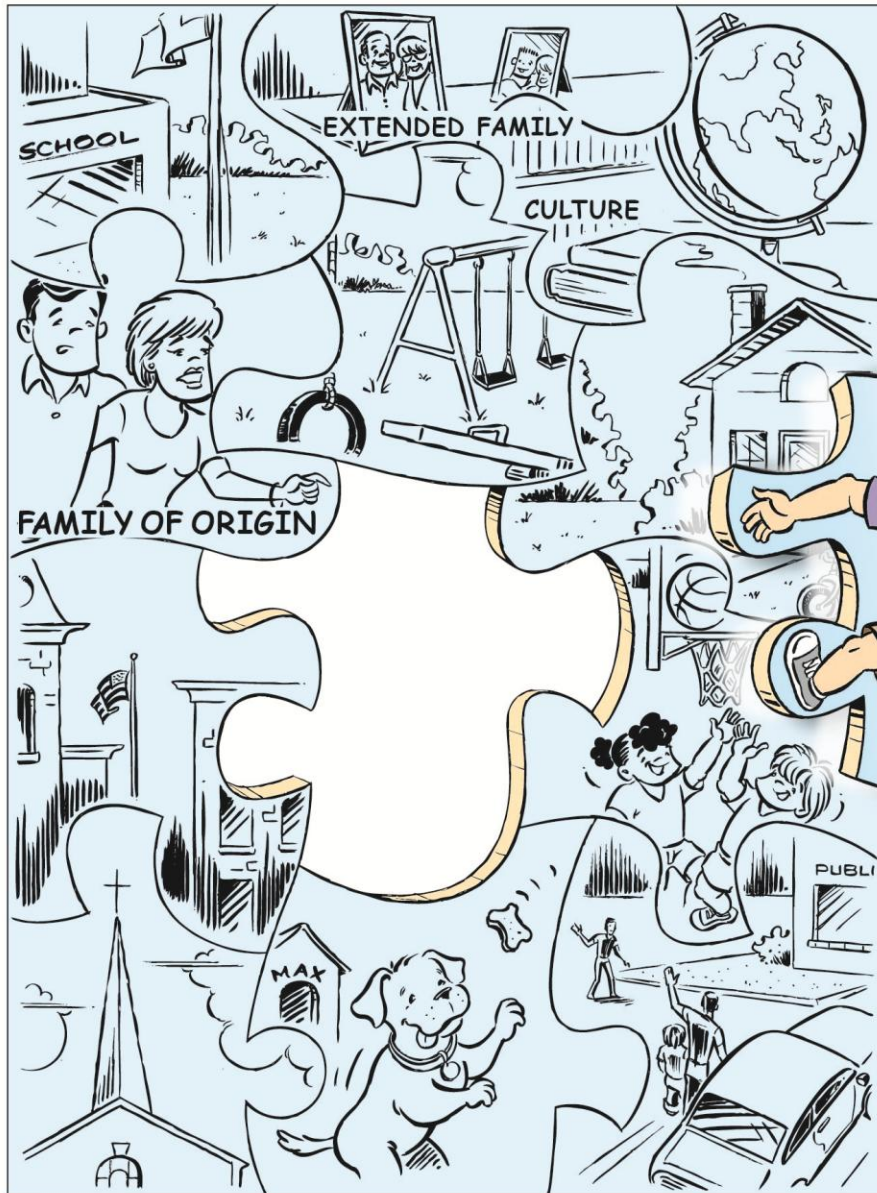


Placement Options

Out-of-home care is sometimes needed:

- Relative caregiver
- Foster home
- Group home
- Residential placement
- Psychiatric facility

One Child, Two Worlds: Where Do I Fit? How Do I Fit?





Safely Home, Families First

- Children are safely home with services or with appropriate relatives.
- Indiana law requires DCS to consider relative placement before considering any other out-of-home placement.
- National research shows when children are placed with relatives, there are improvements in outcomes, reductions in case length & fewer traumatic effects of removals.



Removal

When deciding to remove a child from home, DCS will:

- Regard the safety of the child as most important.
- Consider whether the parent is amenable to accepting any needed services.
- Engage the child and family team.
- Utilize information gathered in the assessment.
- Use information gathered in safety and risk assessments.



On-Going Case Management

DCS must make reasonable efforts to preserve and reunify the family in line with Indiana law.

Case management assures child's safety by:

- Scheduling regular meetings with the family & child.
- Ensuring needed family & child services are received.
- Convening the child & family team.
- Completing court reports.
- Developing a plan for permanency.
- Facilitating parenting time & sibling visitation.



How You Can Help

- **Report child abuse to the Hotline: [800.800.5556](tel:800.800.5556).**
- **Offer to help your relatives/friends/ neighbors** who are under stress and may need some assistance by babysitting, cooking, providing transportation, mentoring.
- **Become a foster parent: [888.631.9510](tel:888.631.9510).**
- **Become an adoptive parent: [888.25ADOPT](tel:888.25ADOPT).**
- **Purchase “Kids First” license plates:** Funds prevention services.